

What is claimed is:

- 1) A nursing garment and support bra as an outer body covering for a nursing mother suitable as a sleeping garment and support bra which provides support for the breasts and access to the breasts by a nursing infant, which nursing garment and support bra, in combination, comprising:

two shoulder supported breast retention panels;

an abdomen covering panel;

a back covering panel;

the two breast retention panels secured to the abdomen-covering panel to form a V-neck opening;

the sides of breast retention panels attached to the back panel sides to form right side and left side coverings for the right breast and left breast of the nursing mother, each breast retention panel secured to top of the back covering panel to form shoulder support of the garment;

each shoulder supported breast retention panel comprising two fabric layers, a first fabric layer as an outer panel covering, a second fabric layer as a liner for the first fabric layer, each second fabric layer containing an opening positioned to fit over each breast;

each shoulder supported breast retention panel containing an elastic strap positioned on the V-neck line of each breast retention panel from the shoulder of each breast retention panel to the seam securing each breast retention panel to the abdomen covering panel below the breasts;

an elastic strap positioned and secured to the seam securing each breast retention panel to the abdomen panel below the breasts, and secured to each side seam of the back covering panel at the left and right sides of the garment;

the abdomen covering panel secured to each side of the back covering garment to form a body covering garment from shoulders to waist in conjunction with said two breast retention panels;

means to secure the bottom edges of the abdomen covering panel and the joined back covering panel as a retention means for positioning and fitting the garment around the nursing mother's body.

- 2) The nursing garment and support bra of Claim 1 wherein the two fabric layers of said breast retention panels are joined at the edges to form inside pockets for retention of a breast pad or prosthesis, the fabric layer on the body side of each breast retention panel having an opening to insert said breast pad or prosthesis, each opening positioned to be over each breast.
- 3) The nursing garment and support bra of Claim 1 wherein the garment is made of a natural, synthetic or natural/synthetic blend fabric, which is soft, stretchable,

and resilient, providing a moderate degree of support for the portion of the woman's body which it encases.

- 4) The nursing garment and support bra of Claim 1 wherein the fabric of the garment is selected from the group consisting of spandex, nylon, polyester, cotton and blends thereof.
- 5) The nursing garment and support bra of Claim 1 wherein the back covering has "scoop" style shoulder straps to define a conventional back neck opening wherein the back neck opening extends to about the shoulder blades and the arm opening is defined by the garment's shoulder straps.
- 6) The nursing garment and support bra of Claim 1 wherein the back covering is defined with "T" style shoulder straps, the neck opening does not extend down the back of the wearer, is high up on the back and close to the neck line, and the arm openings extend into the back of the wearer sufficiently to provide support to the bosom of the wearer, the arm openings no lower than below the bust line.
- 7) The nursing garment and support bra of Claim 1 wherein a skirt is attached to the garment at or below the waist line, to encase a woman's torso from the shoulders to below the knees to comprise a full length gown or dress.
- 8) The nursing garment and support bra of Claim 1 wherein the back of the garment has a center seam running from the center back below the neck opening of the garment to the bottom hem line of the garment.

- 9) The nursing garment and support bra of Claim 1 wherein said means secured to the bottom edges of the abdomen covering panel and the joined back covering panel as a retention means for positioning and fitting the garment around the nursing mother's body comprises an elastic lace of a sufficient elasticity to provide moderate stretchability without high stretchability and is secured to the bottom edges of the abdomen covering panel and the joined back covering panel.
- 10) The nursing garment and support bra of Claim 1 wherein said means to secure the bottom edges of the abdomen covering panel and the joined back covering panel as a retention means for positioning and fitting the garment around the nursing mother's body comprises a narrowed hem line secured to the bottom edges of the abdomen covering panel and the joined back covering panel.
- 11) The nursing garment and support bra of Claim 1 wherein said opening positioned to fit over each breast comprises a means of positioning, holding and supporting a breast pad and prosthesis, and is, alternatively, in the form of a slit, a circular opening, an oval opening and any modification of a slit, circular shaped opening, oval shaped opening.